lating to nationality, age, educational qualification, residence, income, multiple dealership norms, etc. Selection of the dealers/distributors from amongst the eligible candidates is made by duly constituted Dealer Selection Boards. The selection process is already on.

(c) Does not arise.

Space Programmes for Rural Upliftment

*356. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are utilising the Space programme for rural upliftment;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) to which regions this programme is being beamed at present; and

(d) what has been the response of the people thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government is using Satellite TV transmission for rural development.

(b) The Department of Space in coordination with Ministry of Rural Development and the State Government of Madhya Pradesh is conducting a Project called Jhabua Development Communication Project (JDCP). This project is providing development programmes through Satellite Television to the tribal villages in Jhabua District in M.P.

(c) This Programme is presently being beamed to the villages in Jhabua District of Madhya Pradesh.

(d) Response studies show that there is perceptible knowledge increase among the people.

Sardar Sarovar Dam

*357. SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state that keeping in view the reference to the Cauvery Accord as a precedent and reference in the President's address what are the initiatives Government propose to take for the Sardar Sarovar Dam reaching a stage when water will be diverted to the Main Canal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL): Although the matter is subjudice, efforts are on for arriving at an amicable solution within the framework of the Award of the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal.

Oil Import Bill

*358. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country's Oil import bill of Rs. 35,280 crores is likely to come down to Rs. 26,000 crores due to a fall in international prices and drop in demand due to a lower growth rate in this sector; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons that Government are not passing on this benefit to the public?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY): (a) The oil import bill depends upon the consumption, quantum of imports, and prevailing prices from time to time. The outgo on imports is now expected to be US $6451.9 million as against an original projection in the Oil Economy Budget (1998-99) of US $8418.10 million.

(b) The Government had decided to dismantle the Administered price Mechanism in the petroleum sector in phases. Consequently, oil companies have been allowed to fix the prices based on